

February 6, 2007

Representative Ted Graziani  
Legislative Office Building, Room 4041  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Representative Graziani,

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is a national nonprofit membership organization whose sole focus is the military family. NMFA's mission is to serve the families of the seven uniformed services through education, information and advocacy.

On behalf of these families, NMFA would like to thank you for introducing H.B. No. 6680: An Act Providing Unemployment Benefits for Certain Military Spouses. This bill would enable military spouses, who must quit their jobs to follow or join their spouse in another locality due to Permanent Change of Duty (PCS) orders, to receive unemployment compensation from the State of Connecticut.

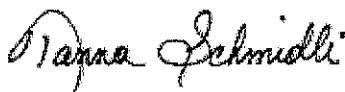
It is heartening to see much needed attention paid to unemployment compensation. As you must be aware, 63 percent of military spouses are in the labor force, including 87 percent of junior enlisted spouses (E-1 to E-5). For many, working to pay bills and cover basic expenses is the primary reason for working. Studies show that the gap between the financial well-being of military families and their civilian peers is largely due to the frequent moves required of the military family and the resulting disruptions to the career progression of the military spouse. Some will say that military spouses knew what they were in for when marrying a service member, but how does one ever know what a lifestyle is like without experiencing it? Military spouses do not feel they have a "choice" to remain behind at their job when their service member receives PCS orders; you keep your family together, you quit your job, you move. The loss of the spouse's income at exactly the time when the family is facing the cost of a government ordered move is further exacerbated when the spouse is unable to collect unemployment compensation. Lacking the financial cushion provided by the receipt of unemployment compensation, the military spouse must often settle for "any job that pays the bills" rather than being able to search for a job that is commensurate with his or her skills or career aspirations. This in turn hurts morale and affects recruitment and retention of the service member.

By passing H.B. No. 6680 this year, the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) would help to demonstrate the State's commitment to supporting military personnel and their families. Since the onset of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) military families have felt especially valued and appreciated for their contributions to Connecticut and the Nation. The CGA has made great strides in policies and programs that have increased the quality of life for military families. This effort has not gone unnoticed. All this progress is welcomed and valued.

If you would like more information or further assistance on this issue, please contact Patricia Barron, Deputy Director, Government Relations, at [barron@nmfa.org](mailto:barron@nmfa.org) or by calling (703) 931-6632.

Thank you again for your support of this bill and military families.

Sincerely,



Tanna Schmidli  
Chairman  
National Military Family Association

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
**SENATE, Nos. 746 and 2104**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**212th LEGISLATURE**

ADOPTED JANUARY 29, 2007

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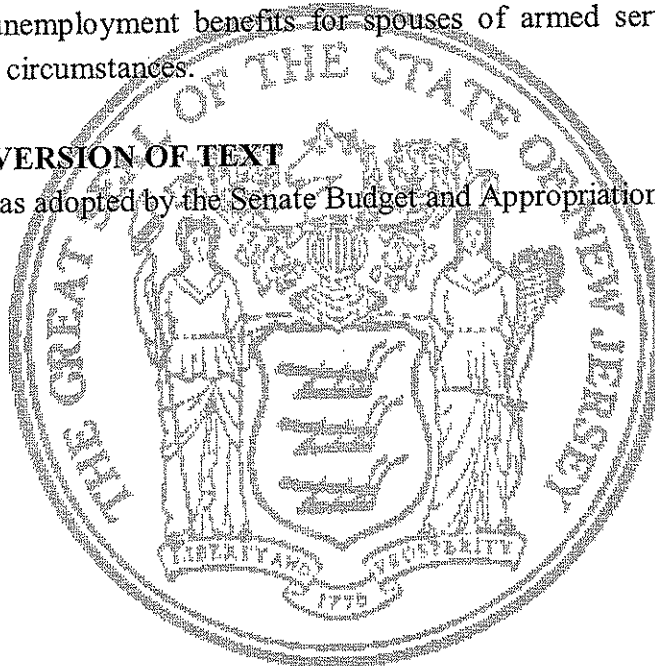
**Senators Karcher, Bucco, Coniglio, Sarlo and Vitale**

**SYNOPSIS**

Provides unemployment benefits for spouses of armed services members under certain circumstances.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Substitute as adopted by the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee.



1 AN ACT providing unemployment benefits for certain spouses of  
2 armed forces members and amending R.S.43:21-5.

3  
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
5 of New Jersey:

6  
7 1. R.S.43:21-5 is amended to read as follows:

8 43:21-5. An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

9 (a) For the week in which the individual has left work  
10 voluntarily without good cause attributable to such work, and for  
11 each week thereafter until the individual becomes reemployed and  
12 works four weeks in employment, which may include employment  
13 for the federal government, and has earned in employment at least  
14 six times the individual's weekly benefit rate, as determined in each  
15 case. This subsection shall apply to any individual seeking  
16 unemployment benefits on the basis of employment in the  
17 production and harvesting of agricultural crops, including any  
18 individual who was employed in the production and harvesting of  
19 agricultural crops on a contract basis and who has refused an offer  
20 of continuing work with that employer following the completion of  
21 the minimum period of work required to fulfill the contract.

22 (b) For the week in which the individual has been suspended or  
23 discharged for misconduct connected with the work, and for the five  
24 weeks which immediately follow that week [(in addition to the  
25 waiting period)], as determined in each case. In the event the  
26 discharge should be rescinded by the employer voluntarily or as a  
27 result of mediation or arbitration, this subsection (b) shall not apply,  
28 provided, however, an individual who is restored to employment  
29 with back pay shall return any benefits received under this chapter  
30 for any week of unemployment for which the individual is  
31 subsequently compensated by the employer.

32 If the discharge was for gross misconduct connected with the  
33 work because of the commission of an act punishable as a crime of  
34 the first, second, third or fourth degree under the "New Jersey Code  
35 of Criminal Justice," N.J.S.2C:1-1 et seq., the individual shall be  
36 disqualified in accordance with the disqualification prescribed in  
37 subsection (a) of this section and no benefit rights shall accrue to  
38 any individual based upon wages from that employer for services  
39 rendered prior to the day upon which the individual was discharged.

40 The director shall insure that any appeal of a determination  
41 holding the individual disqualified for gross misconduct in  
42 connection with the work shall be expeditiously processed by the  
43 appeal tribunal.

44 (c) If it is found that the individual has failed, without good  
45 cause, either to apply for available, suitable work when so directed

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is

1 by the employment office or the director or to accept suitable work  
2 when it is offered, or to return to the individual's customary self-  
3 employment (if any) when so directed by the director. The  
4 disqualification shall continue for the week in which the failure  
5 occurred and for the three weeks which immediately follow that  
6 week [(in addition to the waiting period)], as determined:

7 (1) In determining whether or not any work is suitable for an  
8 individual, consideration shall be given to the degree of risk  
9 involved to health, safety, and morals, the individual's physical  
10 fitness and prior training, experience and prior earnings, the  
11 individual's length of unemployment and prospects for securing  
12 local work in the individual's customary occupation, and the  
13 distance of the available work from the individual's residence. In  
14 the case of work in the production and harvesting of agricultural  
15 crops, the work shall be deemed to be suitable without regard to the  
16 distance of the available work from the individual's residence if all  
17 costs of transportation are provided to the individual and the terms  
18 and conditions of hire are as favorable or more favorable to the  
19 individual as the terms and conditions of the individual's base year  
20 employment.

21 (2) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, no  
22 work shall be deemed suitable and benefits shall not be denied  
23 under this chapter to any otherwise eligible individual for refusing  
24 to accept new work under any of the following conditions: [(a) if]  
25 the position offered is vacant due directly to a strike, lockout, or  
26 other labor dispute; [(b) if] the remuneration, hours, or other  
27 conditions of the work offered are substantially less favorable to the  
28 individual than those prevailing for similar work in the locality;  
29 [(c) if] or, the individual, as a condition of being employed [the  
30 individual], would be required to join a company union or to resign  
31 from or refrain from joining any bona fide labor organization.

32 (d) If it is found that this unemployment is due to a stoppage of  
33 work which exists because of a labor dispute at the factory,  
34 establishment or other premises at which the individual is or was  
35 last employed.

36 (1) No disqualification under this subsection (d) shall apply if it  
37 is shown that:

38 (a) The individual is not participating in or financing or directly  
39 interested in the labor dispute which caused the stoppage of work;  
40 and

41 (b) The individual does not belong to a grade or class of workers  
42 of which, immediately before the commencement of the stoppage,  
43 there were members employed at the premises at which the  
44 stoppage occurs, any of whom are participating in or financing or  
45 directly interested in the dispute; provided that if in any case in  
46 which (a) or (b) above applies, separate branches of work which are

1 are conducted in separate departments of the same premises, each  
2 department shall, for the purpose of this subsection, be deemed to  
3 be a separate factory, establishment, or other premises.

4 (2) For any claim for a period of unemployment commencing on  
5 or after December 1, 2004, no disqualification under this subsection  
6 (d) shall apply if it is shown that the individual has been prevented  
7 from working by the employer, even though[  
8

9 (a) The] the individual's recognized or certified majority  
10 representative has directed the employees in the individual's  
11 collective bargaining unit to work under the preexisting terms and  
12 conditions of employment[;], and

13 [(b) The] the employees had not engaged in a strike immediately  
14 before being prevented from working.

15 (e) For any week with respect to which the individual is  
16 receiving or has received remuneration in lieu of notice.

17 (f) For any week with respect to which or a part of which the  
18 individual has received or is seeking unemployment benefits under  
19 an unemployment compensation law of any other state or of the  
20 United States; provided that if the appropriate agency of the other  
21 state or of the United States finally determines that the individual is  
22 not entitled to unemployment benefits, this disqualification shall not  
23 apply.

24 (g) (1) For a period of one year from the date of the discovery  
25 by the division of the illegal receipt or attempted receipt of benefits  
26 contrary to the provisions of this chapter, as the result of any false  
27 or fraudulent representation; provided that any disqualification may  
28 be appealed in the same manner as any other disqualification  
29 imposed hereunder; and provided further that a conviction in the  
30 courts of this State arising out of the illegal receipt or attempted  
31 receipt of these benefits in any proceeding instituted against the  
32 individual under the provisions of this chapter or any other law of  
33 this State shall be conclusive upon the appeals tribunal and the  
34 board of review.

35 (2) A disqualification under this subsection shall not preclude  
36 the prosecution of any civil, criminal or administrative action or  
37 proceeding to enforce other provisions of this chapter for the  
38 assessment and collection of penalties or the refund of any amounts  
39 collected as benefits under the provisions of R.S.43:21-16, or to  
40 enforce any other law, where an individual obtains or attempts to  
41 obtain by theft or robbery or false statements or representations any  
42 money from any fund created or established under this chapter or  
43 any negotiable or nonnegotiable instrument for the payment of  
44 money from these funds, or to recover money erroneously or  
45 illegally obtained by an individual from any fund created or  
46 established under this chapter.

(h) (1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter

1 denied benefits for any week because the individual is in training  
2 approved under section 236(a)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974,  
3 Pub.L.93-618, 19 U.S.C. s.2296, nor shall the individual be denied  
4 benefits by reason of leaving work to enter this training, provided  
5 the work left is not suitable employment, or because of the  
6 application to any week in training of provisions in this chapter  
7 (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.), or any applicable federal unemployment  
8 compensation law, relating to availability for work, active search  
9 for work, or refusal to accept work.

10 (2) For purposes of this subsection (h), the term "suitable"  
11 employment means, with respect to an individual, work of a  
12 substantially equal or higher skill level than the individual's past  
13 adversely affected employment (as defined for purposes of the  
14 Trade Act of 1974, Pub.L.93-618, 19 U.S.C. s.[2102] 2101 et seq.),  
15 and wages for this work at not less than 80% of the individual's  
16 average weekly wage, as determined for the purposes of the Trade  
17 Act of 1974.

18 (i) For benefit years commencing after June 30, 1984, for any  
19 week in which the individual is a student in full attendance at, or on  
20 vacation from, an educational institution, as defined in subsection  
21 (y) of R.S.43:21-19; except that this subsection shall not apply to  
22 any individual attending a training program approved by the  
23 division to enhance the individual's employment opportunities, as  
24 defined under subsection (c) of R.S.43:21-4; nor shall this  
25 subsection apply to any individual who, during the individual's base  
26 year, earned sufficient wages, as defined under subsection (e) of  
27 R.S.43:21-4, while attending an educational institution during  
28 periods other than established and customary vacation periods or  
29 holiday recesses at the educational institution, to establish a claim  
30 for benefits. For purposes of this subsection, an individual shall be  
31 treated as a full-time student for any period:

32 (1) During which the individual is enrolled as a full-time student  
33 at an educational institution, or

34 (2) Which is between academic years or terms, if the individual  
35 was enrolled as a full-time student at an educational institution for  
36 the immediately preceding academic year or term.

37 (j) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter  
38 (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.), no otherwise eligible individual shall be  
39 denied benefits because the individual left work or was discharged  
40 due to circumstances resulting from the individual being a victim of  
41 domestic violence as defined in section 3 of P.L.1991, c.261  
42 (C.2C:25-19). No employer's account shall be charged for the  
43 payment of benefits to an individual who left work due to  
44 circumstances resulting from the individual being a victim of  
45 domestic violence.

46 For the purposes of this subsection (j), the individual shall be

- 1 (1) A restraining order or other documentation of equitable  
2 relief issued by a court of competent jurisdiction;  
3 (2) A police record documenting the domestic violence;  
4 (3) Documentation that the perpetrator of the domestic violence  
5 has been convicted of one or more of the offenses enumerated in  
6 section 3 of P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-19);  
7 (4) Medical documentation of the domestic violence;  
8 (5) Certification from a certified Domestic Violence Specialist  
9 or the director of a designated domestic violence agency that the  
10 individual is a victim of domestic violence; or  
11 (6) Other documentation or certification of the domestic  
12 violence provided by a social worker, member of the clergy, shelter  
13 worker or other professional who has assisted the individual in  
14 dealing with the domestic violence.

15 For the purposes of this subsection (j):

16 "Certified Domestic Violence Specialist" means a person who  
17 has fulfilled the requirements of certification as a Domestic  
18 Violence Specialist established by the New Jersey Association of  
19 Domestic Violence Professionals; and "designated domestic  
20 violence agency" means a county-wide organization with a primary  
21 purpose to provide services to victims of domestic violence, and  
22 which provides services that conform to the core domestic violence  
23 services profile as defined by the Division of Youth and Family  
24 Services in the Department of Human Services and is under contract  
25 with the division for the express purpose of providing such services.

26 (k) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter (R.S.  
27 43:21-1 et seq.), no otherwise eligible individual shall be denied  
28 benefits for any week in which the individual left work voluntarily  
29 and without good cause attributable to the work, if the individual  
30 left work to accompany his or her spouse who is an active member  
31 of the United States Armed Forces, as defined in N.J.S.38A:1-1(g),  
32 to a new place of residence outside the State, due to the armed  
33 forces member's transfer to a new assignment in a different  
34 geographical location outside the State, and upon arrival at the new  
35 place of residence was in all respects available for suitable work.  
36 No employer's account shall be charged for the payment of benefits  
37 to an individual who left work under the circumstances contained in  
38 this subsection (k), except that this shall not be construed as  
39 relieving the State of New Jersey and any other governmental entity  
40 or instrumentality or nonprofit organization electing or required to  
41 make payments in lieu of contributions from its responsibility to  
42 make all benefit payments otherwise required by law and from  
43 being charged for those benefits as otherwise required by law.

44 (cf. P.L.2005, c.103, s.1)

45

46 2. This act shall take effect on the 90th day following the date



NATIONAL DEFENSE  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

# RESEARCH BRIEF

## Working Around the Military Challenges of Military Spouse Employment

RAND RESEARCH AREAS  
CHILD POLICY  
CIVIL JUSTICE  
EDUCATION  
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT  
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
NATIONAL SECURITY  
POPULATION AND AGING  
PUBLIC SAFETY  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
TERRORISM AND  
HOMELAND SECURITY  
TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE

Successful recruiting and retention of the active duty force depends in large part on the extent to which service members and their spouses are satisfied with the military lifestyle. Prior research suggests both that the most satisfied military families are those with an employed spouse and that the influence of military spouses on service member retention decisions has increased with the proportion of military spouses working outside the home.

The majority of military spouses are employed. Nonetheless, the RAND Corporation finds that they are less likely to be employed, are more likely to be seeking work, and earn less than comparable civilian spouses.

Common explanations for their different employment outcomes are that military spouses tend to be younger, which influences their earnings and employability; that they may choose not to work; or that there may be aspects of the military lifestyle that preclude their employment or affect the types of jobs they accept (and thus their earnings).

To parse these varied explanations and gain a more detailed picture of military spouse employment, RAND researchers characterized military spouse employment based on the analysis of available Census and other data, including the personal perceptions and experiences of military spouses gained from interviews with more than 1,100 military spouses. The goal was to consider the demographics of military spouses, such as age, education level, or number and age of children, as well as less observable factors, such as spouse's interest in work, employer biases against military spouses, or the impact of the military lifestyle on the service member's family.

### Who Are Military Spouses?

Military spouses differ from their civilian counterparts in ways that could explain workforce participation levels. For instance, as befits popular

### Key findings

- Military wives are employed at lower rates and earn less than civilian wives, on average.
- Civilian wives with the same characteristics as military wives actually have better employment outcomes than the average civilian wife.
- The majority of military spouses believe that the military lifestyle—including frequent moves, deployments and long hours that keep service members from assisting with parenting, and living in areas with poor local labor market conditions—has negatively affected their employment opportunities. Almost half believe that their educational opportunities have suffered.
- Military spouses work for different reasons, based on their own education level, their service member's pay grade, and their financial situation.

conceptions, military spouses are more likely to experience frequent long-distance relocations, and are on average younger and thus more likely to have young children at home. Conventional wisdom also tends to envision these spouses in rural locales that limit their employment options and wages. In reality, however, military wives<sup>1</sup> are more likely than civilian wives to live in metropolitan areas. Moreover, they are more likely to have graduated from high school and to have some college education, which ostensibly would increase their employability. But to what extent, then, are their employment outcomes the result of their age, their frequent moves, or other observable attributes?

<sup>1</sup> Due to the small numbers of male spouses, the quantitative analysis of Census and other data included only female spouses of male service members.

This product is part of the RAND Corporation research brief series. RAND research briefs present policy-oriented summaries of individual published, peer-reviewed documents or of a body of published work.

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To answer that question, researchers compared military spouses with civilian “look-alikes” who share the same age, education level, ethnicity, and even frequency of moves. The comparison revealed that the *look-alikes generally fared both better than the military spouses and better than the civilian average*. In other words, the demographics of military spouses suggest that they should have better employment outcomes and higher wages than the average civilian spouse. Instead, however, they are employed at much lower rates and earn less than both the average civilian spouse and those who exhibit the same characteristics. Moreover, RAND compared military spouses specifically with civilian spouses residing in the same metropolitan areas and found that military spouses earn less than their civilian neighbors.

### **A View from the Inside: What the Spouses Themselves Say**

By eliciting spouses’ views about their reasons for working or staying at home, their experiences in or out of the labor market, and what they believe about the impact of military life on their employment and educational opportunities, the interviews done as part of this research paint a richer portrait of the relationship between employment status and the conditions of a military lifestyle.

#### **One size won’t fit all. Reasons for working differ among groups of spouses**

To formulate policies to improve employment, it is important to understand spouse motivations for working. About three-quarters of interviewed spouses who were either employed or seeking work mentioned financial reasons for working, with working to *pay bills and cover basic expenses* as the most widely cited primary reason. The majority of spouses also discussed nonmonetary motives such as working to *avoid boredom and keep busy*, working for *personal fulfillment or independence*, or working to *maintain skills and career status*.

Spouses’ motivation for working varied based on the pay grade of the service member, the family’s financial situation, and the education and occupation of the military spouse. For example, personal fulfillment or independence was a nonfinancial primary reason for working that was widely cited by better-educated spouses and those married to officers. Spouses with less education, married to more-junior enlisted service members, and in more challenging financial circumstances tended to cite financial necessity as their primary reason for working.

#### **Many spouses opt out of the workforce because of conditions unique to the military lifestyle**

Just as revealing are the reasons offered by those spouses who are neither employed nor seeking employment. The vast majority (approximately three-quarters) of spouses out of the labor force mentioned full-time parenting responsibilities as their reason for not working. While some of these spouses prefer to remain out of the labor force, not all stay-at-home spouses lack a “taste” for work. A sizable number of spouses neither working nor seeking work mentioned barriers, including day care problems, local labor market conditions, or demands of the military lifestyle, that hinder their

employment. Although day care and local labor market conditions are issues that large numbers of civilian spouses also face, many military spouses viewed these conditions as the result of their military lifestyle, either because they were removed from extended family that could help with the parenting responsibilities, because they would not have self-selected the location to which the military sent them, or because military demands such as deployments and long hours precluded their service member from assisting them.

#### **A majority believe that military life negatively affected their employment and education**

The clearest indicator of the challenges of military spouse employment is the fact that almost two-thirds of those interviewed felt that being a military spouse had a negative impact on their work opportunities. The most frequently cited cause was *frequent and disruptive moves*. Other causes cited were *service member absence and the related heavy parenting responsibilities* as well as *child care difficulties*. These spouses also referred to the inflexibility of the military workplace to accommodate the needs of military parents. Finally, some spouses cited an *employer bias* against or stigmatization of military spouses, often driven by the employer’s concern that the spouse will be forced to leave abruptly. As with frequent moves and service member absence, this perceived cause is uniquely military.

Many spouses also reported a negative impact on their education. Almost half the spouses believed that their educational opportunities had suffered negatively, once again citing frequent moves and service member absence.

#### **Steps to Improve Employment and Educational Opportunities and Thus Enhance Quality of Life**

When asked what the military might do to improve their employment and educational opportunities, the spouses’ most common recommendation was that the Department of Defense (DoD) increase the affordability and accessibility of both education and military child care programs.

Given these and other spouse suggestions and this study’s findings, RAND researchers generated the following recommendations for DoD to consider in addressing and improving military spouse employment:

- Design employment programs or policies that recognize that different groups of spouses work for different reasons.
- Continue to address military child care availability and affordability, including extended-hours and part-time child care.
- Pursue relationships with local employers and large, nationally prevalent employers to improve hiring conditions for military spouses.
- Consider incentives or requirements for military contractors to prioritize hiring military spouses.
- Reexamine the priority system for civil service jobs, including whether military spouses should receive higher priority than non-retiree veterans.
- Address licensing and certification hurdles to help relocating spouses continue their careers.
- Raise awareness about existing spouse employment programs.

- Become a more family-friendly employer, including better informing families about their service member's schedule and creating more ways for service members to help their spouses with the "crises" of parenthood.

Moreover, the researchers recommended that DoD determine its official position on military spouse education and develop a policy statement to reflect this position. The policy statement should be the basis of how, and establish the extent to which, DoD should encourage, support, or even invest in military spouse education. Depending on the extent of DoD support for military spouse education, the department could address spouse education through such means as

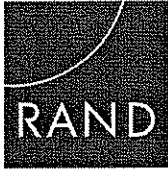
- encouraging education providers to maximize the number of classes offered on military bases and ease the administrative difficulty of transferring courses
- pursuing in-state tuition rates for military spouses
- creating online or distance-learning opportunities.

These findings provide an expansive portrait of military spouse living and working conditions. The quantitative data available confirm the perceptions and experiences of many of the military spouses interviewed and demonstrate that many military spouses make personal employment or academic sacrifices to support their service member spouse's career demands. The strains posed by frequent moves, long spouse absences, and related child care dilemmas are products of the military life. And these strains can play a role in service members' leaving the military to pursue what they perceive to be more family-friendly professions. But by taking some or all of these steps, DoD could reap rewards both in terms of concrete quality-of-life improvements and in general perceptions among service members and spouses that the military is listening to, and acting on, their concerns. ■

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This research brief describes work done for the National Defense Research Institute and documented in *Working Around the Military: Challenges to Military Spouse Employment and Education*, by Margaret C. Harrell, Nelson Lim, Laura Werber Castaneda, and Daniela Golinelli, MG-196-OSD, 2004, 232 pages, \$24, ISBN: 0-8330-3656-4. Copies of this research brief and the complete report on which it is based are available from RAND Distribution Services (phone: 310-451-7002; toll free: 877-584-8642; or email: [order@rand.org](mailto:order@rand.org)) or online at [www.rand.org/publications/MG/MG196/](http://www.rand.org/publications/MG/MG196/). The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors. RAND® is a registered trademark.

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House Bill 404 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Yates of the 73<sup>rd</sup>, Orrock of the 58<sup>th</sup>, Lakly of the 72<sup>nd</sup>, Freeman of the 140<sup>th</sup>, Warren of the 122<sup>nd</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 34-8-194 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 grounds for disqualification of unemployment benefits, so as to provide that leaving an  
3 employer because of the transfer of a spouse from one military assignment to another shall  
4 not disqualify a person from such benefits; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 SECTION 1.

7 Code Section 34-8-194 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to grounds for  
8 disqualification of unemployment benefits, is amended by striking in its entirety paragraph  
9 (1) and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

10 "(1) For the week or fraction thereof in which the individual has filed an otherwise valid  
11 claim for benefits after such individual has left the most recent employer voluntarily  
12 without good cause in connection with the individual's most recent work. Good cause  
13 shall be determined by the Commissioner according to the circumstances in the case;  
14 provided, however, that leaving an employer to accompany a spouse who has been  
15 reassigned from one military assignment to another shall be deemed to be for good  
16 cause; provided, however, that the employer's account shall not be charged for any  
17 benefits paid out to the person who leaves to accompany a spouse reassigned from one  
18 military assignment to another. To requalify following a disqualification, an individual  
19 must secure subsequent employment for which the individual earns insured wages equal  
20 to at least ten times the weekly benefit amount of the claim and then becomes  
21 unemployed through no fault on the part of the individual. Notwithstanding the foregoing,  
22 in the Commissioner's determination the burden of proof of good work connected cause  
23 for voluntarily leaving such work shall be on the individual. Benefits shall not be denied  
24 under this paragraph, however, to an individual for separation from employment pursuant  
25 to a labor management contract or agreement or pursuant to an established employer plan,

3 **SECTION 2.**  
4 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.

## SECTION 2.

4 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.